

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 0607

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS: THE SOCIALIST QUANDARY

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1. POLITICAL PUNDITS AND SOURCES HAVE NOW REACHED A CONSENSUS THAT PSI BLUNDERED IN PRECIPITATING A GOVERNMENT CRISIS AT THIS TIME. (INDEED, UNCONFIRMED SPECULATION IS RIFE THAT THEY FELL INTO A TRAP PREPARED FOR THEM BY MORO FROM THE MOMENT DEMARTINO PUBLISHED HIS PORTENTOUS EDITORIAL, DECEMBER 31.) EVEN NENNI, WHO HAS ALWAYS FAVORED ANTICIPATED ELECTIONS, IS CITED AS HAVING REMARKED ACIDLY THAT THE "CRISIS IS EITHER TOO LATE OR PREMATURE"; I.E., THAT THE SOCIALISTS SHOULD HAVE CAUSED IT IN EARLY FALL, OR WAITED UNTIL MARCH. BY HIS MISTAKE IN TIMING, OBSERVERS AGREE, DEMARTINO HAS GRATUITOUSLY HANDED THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AN AT LEAST TEMPORARY ADVANTAGE, AND ONE TO THE COMMUNISTS AS WELL. FEW EXPRESS SYMPATHY.

2. EMBATTLED SOCIALISTS HAVE MEANWHILE MADE CLEAR THEIR
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PLAN FOR A COUNTER-OFFENSIVE. SOCIALIST DIRECTORATE

YESTERDAY APPROVED ECONOMIC COUNTER-PROPOSALS, THE ACCEPTANCE OF WHICH DEMARTINO SAID IS "A CONDITION (E' PREGIUDIZIALE) FOR A CONTINUATION OF NEGOTIATIONS, AND, THEREFORE, FOR THE DIRECT OF INDIRECT PARTICIPATION OF THE PSI IN THE (SIC) NEW GOVERNMENT." DE MARTINO IS FURTHER QUOTED IN EXCLUSIVE PRESS INTERVIEW TODAY AS REAFFIRMING THAT DC MUST ABANDON "ABSURD PREJUDICIAL EXCLUSION IN PRINCIPLE OF PCI (FROM GOVERNMENT'S MAJORITY)." ONCE THAT IS DONE, HE GOES ON TO SAY, PCI MUST THEN DECIDE HOW IT WILL EXPLAIN TO ITS ELECTORATE AND THE COUNTRY WHY IT VOTES AGAINST (A NEW GOVERNMENT WHICH MEETS THESE CONDITIONS). THIS IN A NUTSHELL IS THE ONE(DC)-TWO(PCI) PUNCH COUNTER-OFFENSIVE WITH WHICH THE PSI HOPES TO GAIN THE POLITICAL INITIATIVE.

3. TEXT OF SOCIALIST ECONOMIC PROPOSALS NOT YET AVAILABLE. (IT IS STILL BEING MASSAGED. EMBASSY PROMISED ADVANCE COPY, AND WILL TRANSMIT SUMMARY AND COMMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BEYOND THE TACTICS, MANY OBSERVERS WHO HAVE ALREADY CONCLUDED THAT ASSOCIATION OF PCI TO MAJORITY IS NO LONGER A PSI CONDITION(IN VIEW OF COMPLEMENTARY POSITIONS TAKEN BY DC AND PCI) MAY BE SPEAKING PREMATURELY. SOCIALIST SOURCES CONFIRM THAT PARTY DEEPLY DIVIDED EVEN OVER DEMARTINO'S TACTICAL APPROACH, AND SEE NO WAY PSI CAN ABANDON ITS LONG-STANDING CONDITION, WITHOUT LOSING ITS CREDIBILITY WITH THE LEFTIST VOTER. VOLPE

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